

JOHN McCAIN

ARIZONA

CHAIRMAN

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE,
SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

United States Senate

January 24, 2006

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WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0303
(202) 224-2235

5353 NORTH 16TH STREET
SUITE 105
PHOENIX, AZ 85016
(602) 952-2410

4703 SOUTH LAKESHORE DRIVE
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407 WEST CONGRESS STREET
SUITE 103
TUCSON, AZ 85701
(520) 670-6334

TELEPHONE FOR HEARING IMPAIRED
(602) 952-0170

Ms. Elaine Zelinski
Arizona State Director
Bureau of Land Management
222 N. Central Ave.
Phoenix, AZ 85004-2203

JAN 25 2006

Dear Ms. Zelinski:

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11		
912	64125106	
917		
	Field Office	
	Central Files	
	FOIA	91-25-06
	Action	

I wish to bring to your attention a matter concerning **Ex. 6** who has encountered a problem with the proposed increase in site permit fees.

Because the situation is under your jurisdiction, I am respectfully referring this matter to you for consideration. I feel that this issue would be better addressed by you and request that you respond directly to **Ex. 6**

Thank you.

Sincerely,


John McCain
United States Senator

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF
LAND MANAGEMENT

JAN 25 2006

RESOURCES - 932
STATE OFFICE
PHOENIX, ARIZONA

JM/xcs
Enclosure(s)

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF
LAND MANAGEMENT
2006 JAN 25 P 1:55
ARIZONA
STATE OFFICE
PHOENIX, ARIZONA

TO SENATOR M'CAIN
2400 EAST ARIZONA
BILTMORE CIRCLE PHOENIX AZ.

November 2005
SNOW BIRDS PETITION
QUARTZSITE AZ.

REGARDING PETITION OF PRICE INCREASES ON
LONG TERM VISITORS AREAS IN QUARTZITE AND YUMA.
AS THE PETITION NOTES. OVER THE LAST 6 YEAR THE
PRICES HAVE JUMPED FROM \$75.00 TO \$140.00 NOW
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT HAS AN INCREASE,
OF \$40.00 EXPECTED WHICH BRINGS IT TO \$180.00
PER SEASON. IT MIGHT NOT SOUND LIKE A LOT OF
MONEY, BUT MANY PEOPLE THAT USE THESE AREAS
ARE ON A VERY LIMITED INCOME EX: WAR VETS, HANDICAP
WE HAVE BEEN PROMISED MANY IMPROVEMENT OVER THE
YEARS, AND SEEN NONE, SO WHERE IS THE MONEY
GOING? ANY HELP YOU CAN GIVE US, WOULD BE
GRATEFULLY APPRECIATED.

THANK YOU
SNOW BIRDS OF
QUARTZSITE ARIZONA

RETURN ADDRESS

Ex. 6



PLEASE
READ

What's the harm with users paying to access public lands?

ON ITS FACE, it certainly appears reasonable that we help federal land managers do their jobs. But the issue is much more complicated than that. The Forests Wildlife Refuges, BLM Lands and National Parks that Americans have entrusted to federal agencies to manage are being developed, packaged, and sold back to us as a product. Gone is the concept of nature for nature's sake. Gone is the concept of public ownership of public lands. Instead we find that bigger government, more regulation, and corporate influence are introducing the profit motive into our natural landscapes for the first time in American history.

The Recreation Fee Demo Program is supposed to "demonstrate" that the public will accept the concept of "pay-to-play." After being extended three times, there is a serious move in Congress to make fees permanent and applicable to all public lands. Seven years into Fee Demo we find that simple, rustic campgrounds have been transformed into paved RV parks. People must pay a fee to leave their vehicles at

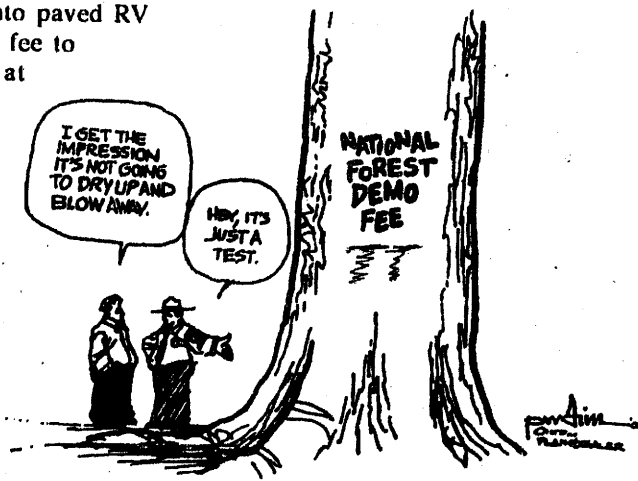
trailheads or drive scenic back country roads. Low income Americans are excluded from enjoying nature on the same terms as the affluent. Fee Demo has created a situation where Forest Rangers are no longer civil servants and stewards of the land. They are now cops on the lookout for "trespassers" without the proper pass to be there. Some entire

National Forests are now off limits unless you purchase an entry pass. Simply put, we are no longer the owners of the land, we are "customers."

Seven years into a failed program, Americans are beginning to speak out and be heard. Americans want Congress to restore adequate appropriations for public lands management from existing tax dollars. We are saying no to heavy-handed, heritage-robbing and discriminatory entrance fees.

Congress counts every Fee Demo pass sold as a vote in favor of the program. The only way to express opposition and protect your heritage is to contact your Congressional delegation and tell them you oppose the Fee Demo program. If you want Fee Demo ended...

...please speak up NOW!



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT : SNOWBIRD'S PETITION

NOVEMBER 2005

SUBJECT LTVAS - PRICE INCREASE

QUARTZSITE ARIZONA

WE THE PETITIONERS:

AS LONG TIME USERS OF LTVAS, WE HAVE SEEN MANY PRICE INCREASES. WE THE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN TOLD OVER THE YEARS OF THE IMPROVEMENTS TO EXPECT FROM THESE INCREASES, AS OF THIS TIME WE HAVE SEEN NO IMPROVEMENT. EXAMPLE WATER STATION AND DUMP STATION IN NORTH LA POSA, AND THE LIST GOES ON AND ON. THEREFORE WE FEEL THIS PRICE INCREASE IS TOO HIGH.

IMPROVE ROAD WOULD HELP

SIGNATURES:

Ex. 6

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QUANTITIES:

Ex. 6

Ex. 6

COPY: SEN. MCCAIN

Sign - Back

~~QUARTZ SITE~~

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NEWS RELEASE

WWW.AZ.BLM.GOV



For Release: November 16, 2005
Contact: Aaron Curtis – 928-317-3200

Bureau of Land Management Announces 30-Day Public Comment Period for the Draft Recreation and Visitor Services Business Plans

Yuma, Arizona – The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Yuma Field Office is in the process of revising its Recreation and Visitor Services Business Plans. The following fee changes have been proposed in the Draft Business Plans to meet higher recreation program costs:

Type of Permit	Short-term Recreation Site Permits	
	Calendar Day Permit	Annual Permit
Current Fees	\$5.00 per vehicle	\$50.00 per vehicle
Proposed Fees	\$10.00 per vehicle	\$75.00 per vehicle
Type of Permit	Long-term Visitor Area Permits	
	7-month Permit	14-day Permit
Current Fees	\$140.00	\$30.00
Proposed Fees	\$180.00	\$40.00

The Draft Business Plans can be viewed on the BLM website at www.blm.gov/az/yfo/index.htm. Requests for paper or electronic copies of the Draft Business Plans, and written comments on the proposed changes may be made to the BLM Recreation and Visitor Services staff by mail, e-mail, or fax. All comments must be received by December 16, 2005. Thank you for your support of your public lands.

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Yuma Field Office
2555 East Gila Ridge Road
Yuma, Arizona 85365
Fax: (928) 317-3250
E-mail: YFOWEB_AZ@blm.gov

Si usted necesita información sobre los planos para negocios de la Agencia de Manejo de Terrenos Publicos en español, por favor llame a Ron Morfin a (928) 317-3200.

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United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
 Arizona State Office
 One North Central Avenue, Suite 800
 Phoenix, AZ 85004-4427
www.az.blm.gov



In Reply Refer To:
 1781/2930 (931)

FEB 23 2006

Ex. 6

Dear Ex. 6

I am writing to you in response to the letter and petition received in Senator John McCain's office on January 12, 2006. Senator McCain has requested that I respond to you directly. The letter expressed dismay about the proposed permit fee increases for next season, questions concerning where this money has been going, and states that none of the promised improvements have been seen.

First, thank you for participating in the public review process of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Yuma Field Office's Recreation and Visitor Services Business Plans. In 2005, the Yuma Field Office authorized 7,786 Long Term Visitor Area (LTVA) permits and hosted 167,794 visits at the La Posa LTVA and 58,978 visits to the Imperial LTVA. We appreciate the time and effort it must have taken to get 240 of you together for one letter. It is only through comments from pro-active citizens, such as yourselves, that the BLM can legally determine if we are managing your public lands appropriately.

I will be proud to explain how the LTVA program is funded and how that funding was used to your benefit.

The Yuma Field Office has invested, and will continue to invest, a considerable amount of money into the LTVA program. Sources of this money include the LTVA permit fees and Federal appropriations for the Recreation & Visitor Services Program.

Since the LTVA program began, the Yuma Field Office has used this funding to complete the following capital improvement projects:

- Construction of four BLM Volunteer Contact Stations in the La Posa LTVA, and the construction of one BLM Volunteer Contact Station in the Imperial Dam LTVA. All of the contact stations have been supplied with electricity and have been equipped with electronic video security systems.
- Construction of one metal shade ramada at each LTVA. The ramadas provide LTVA visitors with an area for organized public events, and are equipped with concrete foundations, solar lighting, picnic tables, and horseshoe pits.

D. Applegate 2/1/06
K. Pedraza 2/17/06
T. G. 2/17/06
Blackburn 2/17/06
H. Rocco 2/22/06
J. Sullivan 2/23/06

- The main access road into the La Posa LTVA (South area) has been paved.
- The main access road into the La Posa LTVA (North area) has been partially paved.
- Phone service has been established in both LTVAs.
- Water systems have been established in both LTVAs.
- Sewage systems and lagoons have been established in each LTVA.
- Four turnouts off Highway 95 have been constructed for each La Posa LTVA entrance.

The Yuma Field Office is currently planning and/or implementing the following LTVA capital improvement projects:

- Installation of a new water and dump station at the La Posa LTVA (Tyson area).
- Paving of entrance roads at the Imperial Dam LTVA and the remaining areas of the La Posa LTVA.

The Yuma Field Office uses these funds to regularly maintain the LTVA facilities to provide for visitor safety and to comply with various Federal, State, and local laws. Yuma Field Office LTVA maintenance investments include:

- Continual road maintenance.
- Repairs/replacement/modifications of water lines, well pumps, buildings, universal accessibility structures, electrical, plumbing, grounds, sewage systems, and trash facilities as needed.
- Removal of recognized hazardous materials to ensure public safety.
- Janitorial contract for the Imperial Dam LTVA.
- One trash collection contract for each LTVA.

The Yuma Field Office also uses funds for staff to support the LTVA program in the field. The recreation program also funds the vehicles and fuel for most of these personnel to complete their LTVA duties. Personnel who support the LTVA program include:

- One permanent and three seasonal Park Rangers.
- Four BLM Law Enforcement Officers.
- Two heavy equipment operators for maintenance activities.
- Eighty-five BLM volunteers who provide the Yuma Field Office with an invaluable on-the-ground presence within the LTVAs.
- Three other BLM Recreation & Visitor Services staff also support the LTVA program from an office setting, as a part of their duties.

It has been three years since the Yuma Field Office has adjusted the LTVA permit fees. These fees have been consistently adjusted every three to four years since the LTVA program began. The BLM is authorized to adjust these fees as necessary to reflect changes in costs and the economy. When determining the adjustment of LTVA permit fees, the BLM considers the direct and indirect costs to the government, the types of services and facilities provided, and the comparable recreation fees charged by other Federal agencies, non-federal public agencies,

and the private sector within the service (43 Code of Federal Regulations § 2932.31). The Yuma Field Office considered the following information in the adjustment of the LTVA permit fees:

- An LTVA permit is valid for seven months each season, from September 15 to April 15. The permit can provide approximately 210 visitor-use days within one or both LTVAs.
- Under the current LTVA permit fee of \$140.00, visitors who stay the entire season are paying 66 cents per day.
- Under the proposed LTVA permit fee of \$180.00, these visitors would pay 85 cents per day.
- The proposed \$40.00 LTVA permit fee increase would result in a net fee increase of 19 cents per day.
- Private sector campgrounds with no facilities in the Quartzsite area normally charge \$3.00 to \$5.00 per day.
- The costs associated with managing the LTVA programs, such as labor, fuel, contracting, operations, and maintenance, have consistently risen over the past three years; while Federal funding to the Yuma Field Office Recreation & Visitor Services program has remained relatively constant.

If you have any additional comments or concerns, I encourage you to contact Ex. 6 Acting Assistant Field Manager for Recreation and Visitor Services, Yuma Field Office, at (928) 317-3207. Once again, thank you for your participation in the public review process of the Yuma Field Office's Recreation & Visitor Services Business Plans.

Sincerely,

/S/ Carl Rountree

Elaine Y. Zielinski
State Director

cc: Office of U.S. Senator John McCain
5353 North 16th Street, Suite 105
Phoenix, Arizona 85016

bc: WO-615, 401 LS
AZ-912, 320

Ex. 6

:djj:02/14/06